Alberta Crop Report

Crop Conditions as of September 15, 2015
Abbreviated Report

Following a brief dry spell to the middle of last week, wet weather over the weekend slowed down or completely halted harvesting operations across the province. Most of the province received rain, from less than 5 mm in northern areas of Peace and North East Regions and small areas in South Region, to over 30 mm across the western portions of the Central Region and northwestern parts of the South Region.

About 96 per cent of dry peas, 74 per cent of canola, 60 per cent of spring wheat, 55 per cent of barley and 29 per cent of oats across the province are either harvested or swathed. Provincially, about 37 per cent of the crops have been harvested (up seven per cent from last week), 29 per cent are in the swath (up three per cent from the prior week) and 34 per cent remain standing (down 10 per cent from last week). When compared to last year harvest progress is ahead in the South, North East and North West Regions and 11 per cent more advanced provincially. However, recent rainfall has delayed harvesting operations across the province.

The condition of pasture and hay are still rated poor, but have improved in the South, Central and North East Regions. Provincially, only 25 per cent of pasture and 22 per cent of tame hay are rated as good to excellent. The North West Region has the lowest, with 93 per cent of pasture and hay rated as poor to fair.

With the recent wet conditions, soil moisture reserves have rebounded significantly. Provincial soil moisture ratings improved for both surface and sub-surface ratings. Provincially, surface moisture improved by about six per cent, to 60 per cent rated good to excellent. Sub-surface soil moisture improved by about 12 per cent, to 50 per cent rated good to excellent. Significant improvements in sub-surface soil moisture were reported in the South, Central and North East Regions (see Table 2).

Table 1: Estimates of Regional Crop Harvest Progress, Alberta

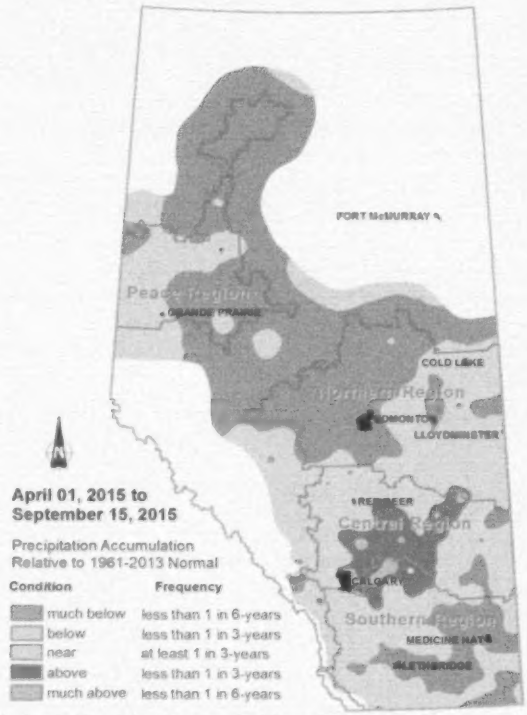
	Per Cent Combined					
	South	Central	NE	NW	Peace	Alberta
	As of September 15, 2015					
Spring Wheat	68.8%	15.3%	49.0%	53.2%	43.5%	46.9%
Barley	79.0%	19.3%	25.0%	32.3%	29.0%	40.6%
Oats	69.8%	1.5%	6.2%	4.3%	25.3%	12.2%
Canola	57.6%	8.7%	6.5%	7.8%	22.7%	19.2%
Dry Peas	99.8%	85.3%	98.8%	97.6%	90.6%	95.5%
All Crops	**71.1%**	**17.1%**	**28.9%**	**28.0%**	**34.1%**	**37.4%**
	As of September 8, 2015					
Alberta	**54.6%**	**14.4%**	**24.7%**	**22.9%**	**25.0%**	**30.7%**
	As of September 16, 2014					
All Crops	**32.1%**	**17.8%**	**20.3%**	**10.1%**	**48.1%**	**26.0%**

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

Table 2: Estimates of Sub-Surface Soil Moisture Conditions, Alberta

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
	As of September 15, 2015				
Southern	22.0%	34.8%	38.7%	4.5%	0.0%
Central	2.5%	25.5%	58.9%	13.1%	0.0%
North East	14.6%	30.4%	49.2%	5.4%	0.4%
North West	51.1%	29.3%	19.3%	0.4%	0.0%
Peace	21.9%	39.6%	33.8%	4.6%	0.0%
Alberta	**18.6%**	**31.7%**	**43.4%**	**6.3%**	**0.1%**
	As of September 8, 2015				
Alberta	**20.7%**	**41.6%**	**34.8%**	**2.9%**	**0.0%**

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Forestry



Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program. Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Environmental Stewardship Division, Technology and Innovation Branch compiled the precipitation map.

Growing Forward 2
A federal-provincial-territorial initiative
Alberta Government
Canada

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2015 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Lots of rain reported over the past week has slowed down harvesting. Canola and cereals sprouting in the swath will be an issue in some areas. At least two more weeks are needed to finish harvest. Yields are reported to be slightly lower than average. The potato harvest has started.
- Harvest in the South Region is 71 per cent complete, with 14 per cent in the swath. About 15 per cent of canola is still standing, with 27 per cent swathed and 58 per cent in the bin. Overall, only 19 per cent of spring wheat, 20 per cent of oats and 12 per cent of barley are still standing, while harvesting of dry peas is complete.
- Rain over the last week improved hay and pasture growth, now rated as 20 and 27 per cent good to excellent, respectively.
- Surface and sub-surface soil moisture conditions have improved and are rated, respectively as 53 per cent good to excellent (up seven per cent from last week) and 43 per cent good to excellent (up 14 per cent from a week ago).

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- Recent rains through the week temporarily halted harvesting operations. In some parts of the region, more cereal crops have been baled for green feed.
- The Central Region has 17 per cent of crops harvested and 28 per cent in the swath. About 39 per cent of canola is standing, with 52 per cent swathed and 9 per cent harvested. About 67 per cent of spring wheat, 66 per cent of barley and 83 per cent of oats are still standing. Dry peas are 85 per cent harvested.
- Pasture and tame hay conditions had a small change from a week ago, with about 69 per cent of pasture and 66 per cent of tame hay growth rated as poor to fair.
- Both surface and sub-surface moisture conditions improved from last week and are rated as 82 and 72 per cent good to excellent, respectively.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- Rain has continued to halt harvest operations. While cereals have been left standing due to rainfall, swathing on canola fields has progressed. Barley sprouting in the swath has been reported in some areas.
- In the North East Region, 29 per cent of crops have been harvested, with 41 per cent in the swath. About 22 per cent of canola is standing, with 72 per cent swathed (up 20 per cent from last week) and seven per cent is in the bin. Nearly 36 per cent of spring wheat, 47 per cent of barley and 63 per cent of oats are still standing, while dry peas are 99 per cent harvested.
- Pasture and tame hay conditions are reported as 67 per cent and 76 per cent in poor to fair condition, respectively, both improved from last week.
- Surface moisture is rated at 69 per cent good to excellent (up five per cent from a week ago), while the sub-surface moisture is rated at 55 per cent good to excellent (up 15 per cent from the prior week)

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Showers over the past week have delayed crop harvest in most areas of the North West Region. About 28 per cent of crops are harvested and 30 per cent are in the swath.
- Swathing has progressed on canola, with 53 per cent in the swath and 39 per cent standing.
- About 38 per cent of spring wheat, 54 per cent of barley and 85 per cent of oats are still standing, while dry peas are 98 per cent harvested.
- The condition of pasture and tame hay has continued to decline and is reporting as 93 per cent in poor to fair (up more than one per cent from last week).
- Surface and sub-surface soil moisture are rated at 33 and 20 per cent in good to excellent range, respectively.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Rain received over the past week has slowed down or completely halted harvesting. Hail was reported in many parts of the region and caused some damage to canola. Frost was also reported in some areas.
- Crops in the Peace Region are reported at 34 per cent harvested and 33 per cent in the swath. About 20 per cent of canola is still standing, with 57 per cent swathed and 23 per cent combined. About 50 per cent of spring wheat, 65 per cent of barley and 70 per cent of oats are still standing with 91 per cent of dry peas harvested.
- Pasture and tame hay conditions remain as 89 per cent poor to fair, unchanged from last week.
- Surface and sub-surface moisture are rated at 41 and 39 per cent good to excellent, respectively; both improved by about nine per cent from a week ago.

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
Economics and Competitiveness Division
Statistics and Data Development Branch
September 18, 2015

Ashan Shooshtarian, Crop Statistician
E-mail: ashan.shooshtarian@gov.ab.ca
Phone: 780-422-2887

Note to Users: The contents of this document may not be used or reproduced without properly accrediting Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Economics and Competitiveness Division's Statistics and Data Development Branch.
The 2015 Alberta crop reporting series is available on the Internet at: *http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sdd4191*